

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

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FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3364

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 418

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, CH

SUBJECT: CHINESE ARCHEOLOGICAL EXHIBITION

REF: A. STATE 50198; B. PEKING 403; C. STATE 54202

1. ON MARCH 12 ANDERSON MET WITH INFORMATION DEPARTMENT'S LI PAO-CHIU TO DISCUSS QUESTION OF DATES FOR EXTENSION OF ARCHEOLOGICAL EXHIBITION. LI FIRST REVIEWED U.S. PROPOSAL OF FEBRUARY 28 AND SAID THAT THIS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH AUTHORITIES CONCERNED. SHE NOTED THAT AT FEBRUARY 28 MEETING HSIAO TEH HAD INDICATED THERE WAS A RATHER LARGE DIFFERENCE OF VIEWS BETWEEN CHINESE AND U.S. SIDES REGARDING THE LENGTH OF EXTENSION.

SHE THEN REVIEWED DATES FOR EXHIBITION IN WASHINGTON AND KANSAS CITY AS CONTAINED IN ORIGINAL AGREEMENT WITH CLOSING DATE IN KANSAS CITY OF

JUNE 7. CHINESE SIDE NOW PROPOSES TWO MONTH EXTENSION FOR SAN FRANCISCO EXHIBITION WITH A CLOSING DATE OF AUGUST 18.

2. ANDERSON INDICATED HE WOULD REPORT PRC PROPOSALS TO DEPARTMENT AND SAID USLO WOULD RESPOND AS SOON AS DEPARTMENT COULD CONSULT WITH SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM AND PROVIDE REPLY. HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT GIVEN LARGE COST OF MOUNTING SUCH AN EXHIBITION, TWO MONTHS WAS RELATIVELY SHORT TIME. IN REPLY LI REVIEWED BY NOW WELL KNOWN CHINESE VIEWS ON PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN HAVING OBJECTS OUT OF THE COUNTRY FOR SUCH A LONG TIME AND NOTED THAT TOTAL TIME IN U.S. WAS FAR LONGER THAN IN ANY OTHER COUNTRY.

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3. AS DEPARTMENT ANTICIPATED, CHINESE SIDE DID NOT RAISE QUESTION OF THE CLOSURE OF KANSAS CITY'S PERMANENT CHINESE EXHIBITION AND WE OF COURSE DID NOT. WE HAVE BEEN PUZZLING OVER WHY CHINESE HAVE CHOSEN TO RAISE THIS QUESTION IN CONNECTION WITH KANSAS CITY WHEN THEY FAILED TO MENTION IT IN THE CASE OF OTHER MUSEUMS HAVING LARGE PERMANENT CHINESE COLLECTIONS. CHINESE DO THEIR HOMEWORK WELL, AND THEY USUALLY HAVE REASONS WHEN THEY CHOOSE TO RAISE TROUBLESOME ISSUES. IT MIGHT BE WISE TO CHECK WITH NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM TO SEE IF THERE IS SOME ASPECT OF THEIR EXHIBIT THAT MIGHT BE UNIQUELY OFFENSIVE TO PRC SUCH AS HEAVY EMPHASIS ON CONFUCIAN TRADITION, MAJOR OBJECTS PURCHASED FROM TAIWAN, ETC. AT LEAST IN THIS WAY WE WON'T BE SURPRISED

SHOULD THE QUESTION BE RAISED ON A GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT LEVEL.
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